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UCAPAWA News

"AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL"

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VOL. II.—NO. 4 September 22, 1941

PLANT OF LARGEST CIGAR FIRM SIGNS

Nine hundred cigar workers in Camden, New Jersey, members of UCAPAWA local 80, just won a thumping victory after a strike of four and one-half weeks.

The strike which was against the Consolidated Cigar Company, largest cigar firm in the U. S., was marked by unusual enthusiasm and solidarity. Most of the workers are girls.

The contract is the best contract in the cigar industry.

Jurisdiction over the tobacco industry was allocated by the CIO to the UCAPAWA last January.

New wage scales provide for $1.00 per thousand for making cigars, a 5% increase to strippers and packers and to those earning over $20 a week, $1 a week flat increase to all workers previously getting $15 to $18 and a $2 increase for those getting $13. This last is more than a 15% increase.

A minimum of $14 a week was established. Generally in the cigar industry wages for girls on all jobs do not run above the bare Wage-Hour minimum of $12 a week.

Double time is to be paid for Sunday and holiday work. Wages will be automatically increased to equal the highest scales won in any other plant.

Other contract provisions include one week's vacation with pay, solid seniority and shop steward systems, joint Union-Company agreement on lay-offs, and no struck work to be produced at the plant.

LABOR TODAY is a monthly pocket-sized magazine which boils down facts and articles and stories about labor. A sample copy is being sent to the President of every local union and to International Representatives and Officers.

Local Union Gains & Activities

Tobacco Workers are Striking
in six Diesel-Wemmer-Gilbert plants in Detroit, Mich., and in Lima, Findlay and Van Wert, Ohio. Since Aug. 29 some 2,200 workers have been out solid. Chief demand is for wage increases.

In Spite of Lost Election
at Vita Foods in New York City six months ago, local 105 has gained the support of most of the workers and has just negotiated a new contract which includes wage increases, two weeks vacation with pay and a closed shop and check-off. Local 105 has organized Hy Grade Food Products and has called for an NLRB election.

Success of the Wage Demand
for 10% of the market price of cotton for cotton pickers is such that Owen H. Whitfield, UCAPAWA Vice-President, can report that "practically all of our members are out in the cotton fields at a wage of $1.50 per 100 pounds and will demand $1.75 next week."

Bro. Whitfield tells of the solidarity of union people in holding out for the demands "though suffering the pangs of hunger" and in spite of intimidation from planters.

Thirty-Four Delegates
representing UCAPAWA Missouri Agricultural locals conferred at Poplar Bluff, Mo., late in August. Most encouraging to the delegates in planning for extending the UCAPAWA program was the news that industrial workers in Memphis were supporting the cotton pickers' wage scale by getting Memphis workers to pledge not to work below the scale. Thousands of cotton pickers are hired in Memphis to go out into the surrounding area.

Jobs of 17 Workers
were protected through the local 26 grievance machinery. When a department was discontinued the 17 workers were laid off at Lummis Peanut Co. in Richmond, Va., and at the same time new people were hired in other departments. Local 26 succeeded in establishing the right of the 17 workers with seniority to the jobs in the other departments.

(Continued on page 3)

The UCAPAWA NEWS

Official publication of the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America, affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations, 205 W. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois. Donald Henderson, President.

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Food for the Hungry

UCAPAWA's campaign to get surplus foods to hundreds of thousands of undernourished share croppers and field workers in the South is going forward with increasing momentum.

It is important for all UCAPAWA members to get behind the campaign 100%. Is the petition being circulated in your local?

CIO Councils Act

Industrial Union Councils which have already notified us that they are supporting the campaign are: Cleveland, Ohio, Winfield, Ala., Los Angeles, Calif., Kiski Valley, Pa., Cook County, Ill., Barberton, Ohio and Portage County, Ohio.

A number of these councils asked for a quauti-ty of petitions for the affiliated local unions to circulate. Such action is what talks.

Chief feature of the campaign is a drive for 100,000 signatures on a petition addressed to President Roosevelt, Claude R. Wickard, Secretary of Agriculture, Milo Perkins, Administrator Surplus Commodities Corporation and to all members of Congress.

The petition calls for immediate steps to distribute surplus foods "under some modified form of the food stamp plan which can meet the pocket books of these shamefully exploited workers."

Locals Back Petition

UCAPAWA Agricultural locals in the South have been returning filled out petitions in a steady stream. First returns were from Archie Johnson and William Fischer of local 344, Harviell, Mo.

Our locals are urged not only to circulate these petitions themselves but to urge their CIO Council to take up the campaign. They should find out from the Council what disposition was made of the letter from President Henderson dated Aug. 19 which asked for action by the Council.

Dope on Wages and Profits

"Wages and Profits in Wartime" in the space of 32 pages gathers together facts and figures which support demands for higher wages.

You can get a copy of this booklet by sending 6c to Labor Research Association, 80 East 11th Street, New York City.

Here is an idea of what the booklet contains.

Under "War Booms Profits," the fact is presented, for example, that in 1940 "A group of 30 corporations producing iron and steel and other metal products, coal and heavy and light machinery showed net profits . . . more than 450 percent in excess of the amount earned by these same companies in 1938" and "71 percent above the 1939 level."

And profit, the booklet makes clear, is figured after bondholders have been paid interest, after officials' salaries have been taken care of and deductions such as for reserves for possible contingencies have been made.

Dividends Up

The section on "Dividends Rise" shows both how very few people received dividend payments and how sharply these payments rose in 1940, 14 percent over the previous year, to a total of $4,888,000,000 for a group of the big corporations.

Figures showing that wages are usually a small proportion of the total value of products indicate how slight an effect, if any, wage raises should have on prices. For the "food and kindred products" industry wages are only 8.6 percent of the total value of the products.

Labor Continually Produces More

Basic to the question of wage increases is the fact that labor productivity is continually rising. As the booklet points out:

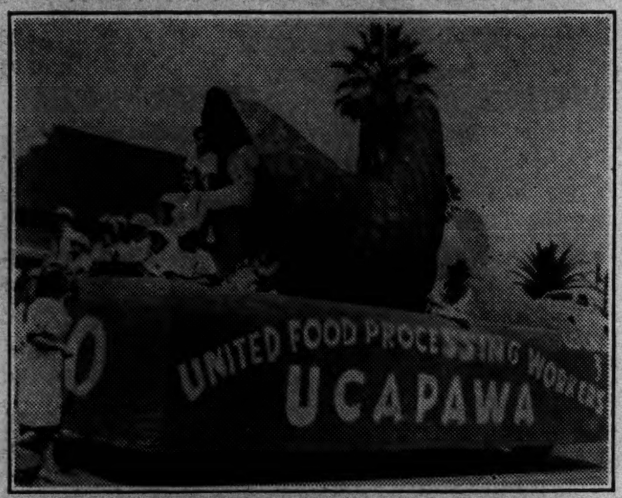
"Labor's increasing production per man-hour (productivity) means that wage rates can be increased without price increases or lower profits. Taking the longer period, 1929 to 1940, the relevant figures show that:

	1929 to 1940
"Factory wages per hour (average)	rose 23%
"Workers' production per man-hour	rose 41%
"Labor cost (per unit of product)	dropped 12%
"Wholesale prices of finished products	dr'p. 13%
"Cost of living	dropped 15%

"In some industries labor's output per man-hour rose much more than in manufacturing as a whole . . . in tobacco manufacturing, for example, output per man-hour was 117% higher in 1939 than it was ten years before . . ."

The booklet concludes with "Labor's Program," a summary of the main planks in organized labor's program to protect and improve living standards with determination.

BEST MARCHERS FALL IN



"Hats off" to 800 local 3 members from the Diamond Walnut and California Sanitary Canning who won the prize for "best marchers" in the gigantic Los Angeles Labor Day parade.

Women wore white uniforms and men white shirts and caps and dark trousers.

Consolidated Cigar profits mounted to $467,-147 for the first half of 1941. This is an increase of 43% over the first half year profits in 1940.

IN A NUTSHELL (To Music)

Here's what the members of local 3 are singing in the shop at work and humming on the streets of Los Angeles. The song was written by a "walnut girl"—the shop is a walnut shelling plant—to back up the current demands for a raise to $22 a week and for a union shop.

Union Shop and $22
(Tune "Yankee Doodle")

The walnut girls aren't satisfied,
They're asking for more money,
They're getting sixteen bucks a week
And think it isn't funny.

Chorus:
Union shop and twenty-two!
Twenty-two is jake!
Union shop and twenty-two!
To get the girls some steak!

The prices are all going up
And soon they'll be outrageous,
Everything is being raised,
Except our meager wages.
(Union shop, etc.)

They tell us that we want too much
That we are merely playing,
But aching backs and straining eyes,
Are worth more than they're paying.
(Union shop, etc.)

LOCAL UNION GAINS AND ACTIVITIES

(Continued from page 1)

CIO Tide in Helena, Ark.
is running high. Workers from five plants are signing up in UCAPAWA. Over 1,000 workers turned out to a CIO meeting Sept. 14 in spite of a vicious anti-union campaign and police intimidation.

Full Strength of the CIO
in Memphis, Tenn., is behind the UCAPAWA drive to lick the company union at Buckeye Cotton Oil Mills. At a rally late in August 2,500 workers officially buried the company union and pledged support to the 1,000 UCAPAWA members at Buckeye.

The entire rally recited a pledge that they and their families and friends would fight to the bitter end for all cotton pickers to keep the scale for picking cotton to the union scale established by UCAPAWA Cotton Council.

Michigan, Illinois, Indiana,Ohio Locals
sent representatives to Detroit, Mich., September 7 to hammer out organizing plans for the area.

All-out support to the Diesel-Wemmer-Gilbert strikers in Detroit and Ohio was unianimously voted and telegrams sent to the locals.

Long range plans were outlined for developing the organizing drive in Detroit and Chicago, and in Indiana and Illinois, laying special emphasis on the food and tobacco industries.

Carnation Milk Local Cambridge Springs Telegraphs
"Report victory for Union. All employes back at work with general raise of five cents per hour as per demand. Complete report follows. Fraternal greetings from local 335 and pledge from membership to organize all milk canneries in this area." Local 335 had been on holiday for a day and a half.

Local 64, United Fish Cannery Workers,
San Diego, California, telegraphed their state representatives in Sacramento vigorously protesting a bill designed to take unemployment insurance away from seasonal workers. The bill was killed.

United Food Processing Local, Los Angeles
is standing pat for a union shop and $22 minimum in their new contract with the California Walnut Growers Association. Speed-up and mechanization have yielded more than 1c a pound profit to the Company while wages are only $15 a week for women and 50 to 60c per hour for men.

Labor Day Parades
in Toledo, Detroit and Los Angeles included excellent representation from UCAPAWA locals. In San Antonio, Texas, Pecan Workers local 172 staged a big all-day celebration.

NEW LOCALS

Since December 1, 1940, UCAPAWA has chartered 18 new locals. Six of these locals were reported in the last UCAPAWA News. Here are the other 12:

Tobacco

LOCAL 55, Middletown, Ohio.
E. P. Murphy, Fin. Sec.
No. 3 Bundy Apartments,
Middletown, Ohio.
Company: P. Lorillard Co.

LOCAL 350, Richmond, Va.
Mary Davenport, Pres.
101 East Charity St.
Richmond, Va.
Company: Export Leaf Tobacco Co.

LOCAL 352, Wheeling, West Va.
H. Yahrling, President
1007 Summit St.
Wheeling, West Va.
Company: Augustus Pollack, Inc., and others.

LOCAL 577, Richmond, Va.
Richard Allen, President.
1210 North 27th St.
Richmond, Va.
Company: Larus and Bros. Co.

LOCAL 281, Detroit, Mich.
Martha Drapinski, President
4178 Twenty-Ninth St.
Detroit, Mich.
Company: Webster-Eisenlohr Cigar Co.

Cemetery and Horticulture

LOCAL 353, Birmingham, Alabama.
George Kildren, Rec. Sec.
112 Second Ave. North
Birmingham, Alabama.
Company: Elmwood Cemetery Corp.

LOCAL 374, New Haven, Conn.
Tony Petrillo, President
134 Orchard Street
New Haven, Conn.
Company: St. Lawrence and St. Bernard Cemetery Assns.

LOCAL 680, Philadelphia, Pa.
Patrick Gibbons, President.
1511 Race St.
Philadelphia, Pa.
Company: Holy Cross Cemetery, and others.

LOCAL 293, Brooklyn, N. Y.
Joseph Manning, President
2048 East 37th St.
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Company: Greenwood, Holy Cross, Union Field, Beth David, and others.

Agriculture

LOCAL 255, Stockton, California.
E. D. Wasan, President
P. O. Box 342
Stockton, California
Type work: Agricultural and shed workers in asparagus, tomatoes, sugar beets, grapes, apricots, peaches, pears, etc.

LOCAL 256, Fruitland, Idaho.
Charles A. Roberts, Organizer
P. O. Box 74
Fruitland, Idaho.
Type work: Field work in peas, beets, corn, lettuce, apples, prunes.

LOCAL 326, Caruthersville, Missouri (Pemiscot County)
Type work: Cotton wage workers, sharecroppers and tenant farmers.

Producing Food in Plenty

Announcement by Secretary of Agriculture, Claude R. Wickard, of a new farm program to meet increased food needs is an important turning point in farm policy in this country.

Secretary Wickard disclosed that production goals "have been established on the basis of a thorough canvass of the needs for improved nutrition in this country and the needs of the nations that still stand between this country and Hitler."

Ever since the depth of the depression the basic policy of the government has been to "solve" the farm problem by curtailing production. This business of destroying and curtailing food supplies at the same time millions of people were hungry was heartbreaking to farmers and to trade union people who are earnestly seeking to raise the standard of life in America.

Explanation of the new farm program of "abundance" was carried in the Sept. issue of *Facts for Farmers*, a copy of which has been sent to local unions and representatives.

Immediate interest of UCAPAWA locals in the farm picture is that expansion should mean more jobs.

Stop Skyrocketing Food Prices

Another immediate concern of UCAPAWA members is rising food prices. In one short year between July 1940 and July 1941 retail food prices jumped almost 10% according to official government figures and a total of over 13% since the outbreak of the war.

Big headache is how to stop these rising prices. Trade unionists are fighting for wages which will at least keep up with the advancing cost of living. This is clearly necessary. But any action which will prevent prices from rising in the first place would be welcome. Expanding agricultural production is in this direction. With abundance of food there is no excuse for booming prices. (A program to prevent profiteering by middlemen and processors must go along with this.)

Immediate job of UCAPAWA locals is to get behind the petition campaign for surplus commodities to dramatize the fact that more food is needed.

A program of more food for America and supplies for hungry and embattled Europe is one which we can all wholeheartedly support.